

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 SAM-01 PRS-01 SSO-00 RSC-01 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5459

S E C R E T TEHRAN 1350

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

FOR SECRETARY SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IR

SUBJECT: CBS INTERVIEW WITH SHAH

1. MIKE WALLACE OF CBS INTERVIEWED THE SHAH ON FEBRUARY 18. THE SHAH FOUND HIM QUOTE IMPERTINENT UNQUOTE, SAID THAT HE ASKED NASTY QUESTIONS, AND HAS TODAY DECIDED THAT HE WANTS THE INTERVIEW KILLED. THIS COMES FROM COURT MINISTER ALAM WHO SUMMONED ME MORNING FEBRUARY 19 FOR PURPOSE OF REGISTERING SHAH'S FORMAL REQUEST THAT USG DO WHAT IT CAN TO PERSUADE CBS NOT TO USE THIS TV INTERVIEW. IF ALAM UNDERSTOOD THE SHAH'S CONCERN CLEARLY, IT REVOLVES AROUND THE FACT THAT WALLACE PUT QUESTIONS ABOUT OIL IN SUCH A PECULIAR AND COMPLICATED WAY THAT THE QUOTE HARSH UNQUOTE REPLIES WHICH HE ELICITED FROM THE SHAH MAY WELL CAUSE UNNECESSARY DAMAGE IN SAUDI-IRANIAN RELATIONS. ASSURED ALAM THAT WE WOULD DO WHAT WE COULD BUT POINTED OUT TO HIM, WHAT HE OBVIOUSLY REALIZES, THAT WE HAVE LITTLE LEVERAGE WITH OUR BROADCASTING COMPANIES. MAY I SUGGEST THAT YOU ASK SOME APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL CONTACT DICK SALENT OF CBS, WHO MAY BE WILLING TO LISTEN TO WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE REASON. ALSO, WOULD YOU PLEASE BRING THIS ISSUE TO THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL ATTENTION.

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2. ALAM IS SENDING A MESSAGE TO AMBASSADOR ZAHEDI ASKING HIM TO CONTACT MIKE WALLACE, WHO HAD BY THIS MORNING ALREADY DEPARTED TEHRAN, AND ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE HIM NOT TO USE THE SHAH MATERIAL. ALAM WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD CONSULT WITH AMB. ZAHEDI AND DECIDE WHETHER IT IS MORE EFFECTIVE FOR HIM TO PROCEED ON HIS OWN OR WHETHER IT WOULD BE MORE PERSUASIVE FOR HIM TO CONTACT WALLACE WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE DEPARTMENT AND WITH DEPARTMENTAL OFFICER PRESENT. INCIDENTALLY, COURT PRESS REFERENT YAZDEN-PANAH CONTENDS THAT HE HAS AN AGREEMENT WITH WALLACE TO SEE THE VIDEO TAPE OF THE INTERVIEW BEFORE IT IS BROADCAST. IF THIS AGREEMENT HOLDS, IT MAY SLOW UP THE USE OF THE MATERIAL SO THAT YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REASON WITH CBS.

HELMS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES, JOURNALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TEHRAN01350
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740223/aaaaavrh.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 AUG 2002 by kellew0>; APPROVED <02 DEC 2002 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CBS INTERVIEW WITH SHAH
TAGS: PFOR, IR, SA, CBS, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMED REZA), (WALLACE, MIKE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005